

Bismarck Human Relations Committee Meeting

Date: February 22, 2016 **Location:** City County Building, 221 N. Fifth Street, Bismarck, ND

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:21 pm

Roll Call:

Members Present: Will Kincaid, Rissa Williams, Sharon Korsmo, Michael Kraemer

Members Absent: Karel Sovak, Michelle Thomas, Susan Sisk

Guests Present: Gloria David, Leah Hargrove, Bismarck Global Neighbors; Kim Tirona, KATZ

Events: T.J. Jerke, ND Humane Society, ND Human rights Coalition member; Waylon

Hedegaard and Alicia Rixen, AFL-CIO; Barry Nelson, ND Human Rights Coalition

HRC Mission: The mission was read.

Acceptance of Minutes: January 25, 2016 minutes approved.

Election of President: Motion made by Williams to re-elect Sharon Korsmo. Motion withdrawn by Williams. Kincaid made a motion hold the election at the March 21 meeting, Williams seconded the motion, motion carried. Election will be held at the March 21, 2016 meeting. All HRC members strongly encouraged to attend.

Human Rights Essay Poetry Contest update: Gloria David, City staff liaison, provided an update. Three students received awards for their outstanding poem and essay contest entries. Mayor Mike Seminary presented the awards to students who were surrounded by their parents, guests and Human Relations Committee members Will Kincaid, Rissa Williams and Susan Sisk. Mayor Seminary congratulated the students for their outstanding achievements. Three students received awards including: Ryan Zhang, fourth grade student, St. Mary's Grade School, poetry award for his poem titled "Human Rights"; Haiden Pederson, an eighth grade student at Simle Middle School, student essay award for her essay titled "Leadership is for Everyone" and Rylie Fode, seventh grade Horizon Middle School, poetry award for her poem "What is a Flame".

Public Comment: Guest Barry Nelson, ND Human Rights Coalition – education and advocacy, introduced the name of local Bismarck board members serving on the coalition: T.J. Jerke (in attendance), Karla Buzick and Kathryn Artlip. The coalition worked to change policy at the State Legislative level. T.J. Jerke was coordinator of the effort last session. North Dakota does not have laws regarding discrimination for employment, housing (GLBT) or hate crimes. He said policy needs to change. The ND Human Rights Coalition has a goal to develop partnerships at the local level leading up the next legislative session regarding anti-discrimination, gender pay equity, human trafficking and would like to see more cooperation and synergy between groups. Recently the Fargo City Commission passed a resolution to change what has been celebrated as Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. Waylon Hedegaard, AFL-CIO reported that member of their group attend most Diversity University Events. Would like to see more publicity of these events. Fifteen years ago the AFL-CIO at the national level made an executive decision to become more inclusive and locally they are working to achieve a more inclusive organization and to support local organizations that don't conflict with the AFL-CIO. T.J. Jerke strongly advocated for LGBT anti-discrimination legislations. Conversations are on-going monthly.

Diversity University event/quarterly updates: President Sharon Korsmo gave an update on the Black History Month event held Feb. 21, 2016. Three panelists, North Dakota residents Henry Blakes, Bobby Harper and Rochelle Williams joined for a candid conversation about race in observance of Black History Month at the North Dakota Heritage Center. Will Kincaid, HRC member, served as moderator and presented a slide show of historical photographs he prepared. The event was co-hosted by the Bismarck Human Relations Committee and the State Historical Society of North Dakota, and was part of the State Historical Society's Sensational Sundays programs. Approximately 100 guests attended.

Guests Kim Tirona and Leah Hargrove introduced an event that they are working to coordinate, the Missouri River Intercultural Festival, Saturday, April 23, 10 am – 4 pm, at Gateway Mall. The format of the event described would be to set-up vendor tables at Gateway Mall, with the mall providing a stage and sound system. Intended guests may include such vendors as United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) Latiana, Asian Gourmet market, Thai restaurants, Kenyans in North Dakota, Germans from Russia, Sons of Norway, cultural dance and language clubs. They would like to partner with the HRC for the event. Williams made a motion to partner with Global Neighbor for the Intercultural Festival as a second quarter Diversity University event. Kincaid seconded the motion for purposes of discussion. Discussion followed. Kincaid asked what HRC's role would be as a partner? Kim advised Gateway Mall would set up tables and chairs for event and would seek more information regarding logistics and overall needs for an event of this scale. The motion was tabled until the next meeting.

Other Business: Kincaid inquired about the possibility of an HRC Facebook page. Gloria David reported that the City's policy provides that Boards and Committees information is maintained within the structure of the City of Bismarck's official social media sites.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: Monday, March 21, at 5:15 p.m. at the City County Building, 221 N. Fifth Street, Bismarck, ND